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Moses and Aaron; THE KING AND THE PRIEST.

*By the Author of the Examination of Tile-
 nus before the Triers, in the time of
 the late Rebellion.*

Doctor Lawrence Wornock
Mon. Bishop of Exeter
 PSAL. 77. the last.

*Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the
 hand of Moses and Aaron.*

Z E C H. 6. 13.

*And the counsel of peace shall be between
 them both.*

L O N D O N :

*Printed by A. Maxwell for R. Clavel, at the Peacock, near
 the West-end of St. Pauls. 1 6 7 5.*

Moses and Aaron

THE

KING

AND THE

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By the order of the Examination of the
was before the King, in the name of
the law of the Kingdom.

And the counsel of the King, in the name of
the law of the Kingdom.

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the law of the Kingdom.

LONDON

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the University of St. Paul, 1875.

1 SAM. 24:5.

*And it came to pass afterward, that
David's heart smote him, because he
had cut off Saul's Skirt.*

THe Service of this day is designed to celebrate the glorious *Memory* of King *Charles the Martyr*. Yet he was assigned as a Malefactor, and a *high Court* of Justice was erected for his *Trial*. A Court that was no ways *High*, but in *Guilt* and *Impudence*: No way capable of the Title of *Justice*, but by an *Antiphrasis*; because it was so eminently unjust, as well in it's illegal Constitution, as in their direful proceedings against their Royal Sovereign. Yet before this Court he is led, even as a *Lamb to the Slaughter*; and the Scene is dress'd up, with all the formalities of a legal Trial, that he might, with the better Grace

be mocked out of his life, by a *Pageantry* of Justice.

But whether such Barbarous attempts upon the Person of a King, by his own *Liege* People, be warrantable in the sight of Heaven, will be best decided by the *vote* and *practice* of a worthy subject, who was a *great sufferer*, under the Power of a *Severe* Sovereign; yet himself a *great Prince*, and a *Stout Souldier*, and a man after Gods own heart. And upon this Accompt I have made choice of this Text, for the subject of my Discourse at this time. *And it came to pass afterward, that Davids heart smote him, because he had cut off Sauls Skirt.*

Which words do intimate, 1. *A Temptation*, and, 2. declare the *Issue* of it. The *Temptation* was, To destroy Saul, his Royal Sovereign: 2. The *Issue* of it was, an Act of Policy, with his Remorse and Repentnce for it.

The first words of the Text do refer us to the *Temptation*: *And it came to pass afterward.* The latter do report the *Issue*: *Davids heart smote him, because he had cut off Sauls Skirt.*

In the first, we shall consider the strength
of

of the Temptation; how it was fortified, with what force of argument it was armed, and with what vigour of Importunity it was managed, to assault him.

In the second we shall observe two things.

1. What *David* did, *He cut off the Skirt of Sauls Military Robe.*

2. What he suffered, *His heart smote him for it.*

1. The *Temptation* came upon him (as the wise-man observes Poverty to come upon the slothful,) *like an armed man*; and did most impetuously assault him upon many accompts. For there was a mighty *Provocation*, and a seeming necessity; and advantageous *Providence* and a fair opportunity, a cleer *Title* to the Crown and a pretended *Oracle*; to make way and lay claim to it. These were very plausible arguments, and there wanted not a Combination of Agitators, or a pathetical *Importunity* to inforcethem.

1. The *Temptation* was armed with a specious kind of necessity, which hath no Law to govern it. The implacable malice of *Saul*, and his frequent *Machinations* to destroy *David*, without any cause or colour of offence, were a mighty

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*O perapretium
est etiam ipsorum
militum audire
consultationem,
eo quod exhorta-
tionis versuta
malitia, illu-
strat iusti men-
tem solidam et
inconcussam.
Chrysost. Hom.
de Davide et
Saul. Erat inter-
prete.*

provocation. His malice being wilful and of this complexion, no duty of *Dauids* could possibly either oblige or satisfy. *Saul* was haunted with an evil Spirit. And when the fit was upon him, none could be found so able to apply an effectual remedy as *David*: he is earnestly invited to attend, the charmes of his hand and harp do becalm the distemper, that did afflict him; yet so ignoble, so mean, so vile was his malice, he paises his Physician and musick with a *Javelin*. The King of beasts is not half so fierce and raging: The Lion may be made gentle, and kindness will oblige him; where he meets with a due submission, he will exercise a Princely Clemency: But such was the perverse humour of this King of *Israel*, no duty in *David*, no worthy performance could mitigate his displeasure: *Dauids* prudence did increase his jealousy; his merits did inflame his envy, and his best Services did the more inflame his malice. When *David* conducted his forces by his own order, his best success became not only a matter of suspicion, but a crime, as if it had bin an attempt of Treason to desert his enemies. But the most unreasonable

able of *Saul's* fears, and jealousies were those, which arose upon the account of Gods presence and blessing in his enterprises; he was afraid of *David*, because the Lord was with him.

1 Sam. 18. 12.

But it is the property of a wicked man, to carry the fear of a slave towards Almighty God, because he wants that of a dutiful Son, a pious Servant.

Whether it were out of tenderness, or Shame, or Policy; once he was resolved not to ingage his own hand in so Barbarous an Act, as the murdering of him; he designs therefore to take him off by Stratagem, and to ruine him in the way of Generosity; he does advance him to be a Captain in his Army, but it is with Design to have him cut off by the sword of the Philistins; Then he gives him his Daughter in marriage, that his bed might become a snare to him; for his intent was, that *David's* life should pay for her dowry. When these Designs and the attempts of *Assasins* had, through Divine Providence, become prosperous: And when *David's* incounters with the *Philistins*, had out of hazard brought him Honour, out of peril Triumph; Then *Saul*

1 Sam. 18. 13.
with 25.1 Sam. 18. 21.
25.

re-

resolves to act that part himself which was most proper for so ill a nature, the part of a Tyrant and a Butcher. And then he pursues him in his own Person, as a Partridge upon the mountains; and many setters were employed and watchful to intrap him. But Divine Providence was ever ready to step into his rescue; for one while he is arrested in his pursuit, by the Spirit of Prophecy, which came upon him; another while he is diverted by the incursion of the *Philistins* into his Territories. And thus the All-wise God does order the attempts of malicious enemies to be subservient to his own overruling Power, for the safety of the faithful; but this respite from Persecution was of no long continuance. The *Philistins* are no sooner retired, but like an unwearied Blood-hound *Saul* takes the scent afresh, and follows this innocent Lamb, as if he had bin a beast of prey; nor can the desolate wilderness secure him against his causeless Indignation. He does march up such craggy rocks and mountains as threaten the subject-vallies with their prominency, and strike terrour into the passengers with the danger of their falling; mountains that were almost inaccessible.

accessible, affording no ordinary passage, but for wild Goats. His rage was so desperate, his malice so deadly; no danger could discourage, no difficulty could stop him. He does expose himself and his whole Army to a perilous expedition, that he might quench his insatiable thirst after the innocent blood of a most worthy Son and Subject. Now *vim vi repellere*, what more frequent? Doth not the very Law of Nature warrant the Practice To repell force with force? If David had made a virtue of this necessity, and stretcht out his hand to take away the life of such a malicious Aggressor in his own defence; surely the Argument of Self-preservation was pleasurable in his justification; especially if Providence falls in to second this necessity, as it did here; which brings a fresh supply to the force of the Temptation.

2. There was it seems, about *Engedi* a vast Cave, where the Shepherds were wont to secure their Flocks against the scorching Sun, and ravenous wild beasts; thither David was retired to shelter himself and that small party, which was his Guard. While the Kings Army was upon their March, Divine Providence, which over-rules Nature, and steers

the actions of Princes, directs *Saul* into this Cave, whether to take his rest, or to relieve nature some other way is uncertain. Hereupon *David's* Officers are animated to tell him, that now he had an opportunity to make that Cave the slaughter-house and tomb of his deadly Enemy. They tell him that to make hands with such a Providence is to take leave of it, not to embrace it were to slight it, not to follow it were to cross it, and the ready way to provoke God to work at his destruction, who had watched so long carefully for his safety. What the Prophet said to *Yahweh*, in the name of the Lord, after he had dismissed *Ben-hadad* his deadly enemy, whom the Lord had delivered into his hands: *Because thou hast let go out of thy hands a man whom I appointed to never destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.* To this effect did those Agitators of *David's* Army argue, in respect of *Saul*. And to enforce the Argument and the Temptation.

B. They alleged an Oracle, which in their opinion had devoted *Saul* to destruction, as a Sacrifice to Divine Justice, and their own Peace-offering. For the men of *David* said un-

to him, Behold the day, of which the Lord said to thee, Behold I will deliver thee out of thy hand, that thou mayst do as have us: it shall seem good unto thee. Where and when, and by whom this Oracle was delivered is uncertain, whether by God, or by Nathan, or by Samuel; but such an Oracle they pretend David had received, to support and comfort him in his Persecutions; and he had made report of it to his followers to encourage them to adhere firmly to him. And time and providence being the best interpreters of such predictions, they took the confidence upon this occasion, to plead that it might be put in practice. Otherwise not to act upon such a warrant, would be an inexcusable selfishness, if not a stupid cowardice and disobedience. It would be a means to offend and provoke God, to neglect his own life and safety, and to wrong them his most faithful servants.

That they had advised David to kill Saul is evident, and without doubt they urged the execution with much importunity, as well for their own ease, as for their Masters rescue. They had been his constant Companions in his travels, in his exile, in his distance; many a hard march, many a hungry

Verf. 10.

which had they endured under his Conduct, to
 attend and guard his person; many hazards
 had they run, and many dangers had they es-
 caped; and now they carried their lives in
 their hands, while they were hotly pursued
 by an enraged Prince, and a puissant Army.
 Though *David's* life was the main quarry that
 was hunted after, yet they were part of the
 Game, and it was the common game to make
 them prey and booty as well as their Master.
 They could not but long to be rescued out of
 this jeopardy: To return home and sit quietly
 under their own vines, and enjoy their dear
 Relations. This was a very desirable satisfac-
 tion; but not to be hoped for so long as *Saul*
 was so implacable. And their sad experience
 had convinced them, his malice was so mor-
 tal it was not to be extinguished but with his
 life. Nor did they desire to press *David's* ten-
 derness or generosity so far as to put the office
 of an executioner upon him: They desired
 but his Order, nay his *leave* had been suffici-
 ent warrant to them to attempt his rescue with
 their own. And being thus redeemed out of
 his enemies hand, and out of his Jurisdiction
 too, this would have been a *Crowning Mercy*
 unto *David*, and have put it absolutely into

his power to reward their honest and suffering Loyalty. Therefore if not out of love to himself, yet out of kindness and a grateful compliance with them, he was obliged to listen to their counsel. For though careless of his own safety, yet to betray theirs was inhumanity; if his own life were not dear to him, yet (when he has the remedy in his own hands, and may so easily prevent it) to let them still dwell in danger, was such a piece of providence as was not pardonable in a Soldier and a General; being inhaned by a double guilt 1. of unkindness, and 2. ingratitude. And these united Grievances might amount to so high a provocation, as to beget a *mutiny* in his party, and induce them to consult their own peace, and leave him to shift for himself.

5. And no doubt they did inforce the temptation further upon the account of his title to the Crown; and so twisted his interest into the argument together with their own. *David* was the Lords *Anointed*; and declared *Heir-Apparent* to the Kingdom by a sentence from Heaven. God (say they) has *intail'd* the Crown upon thee, and wilt thou be so tame as to suffer Gods declared enemy to

Vers. 20.

to cut off that intail, by taking away thy life, before thou canst inherit? *Saul* knows very well upon whom the Crown is to descend, so that in seeking to destroy thee he fights against God, and attempts to cross the Decrees of Heaven, and to frustrate the Counsel of the most High. To fight against him therefore is to fight the Lords battel; to remove him is the way to accomplish Gods revealed will together with his secret Beneplaciture, and to establish thy self according to Gods Ordinance. *Saul* hath rendred himself unworthy of the Crown, and unfit to govern; he hath ruin'd himself and the whole Kingdom: barbarously slain the Priests and Servants of the Lord, and spared those enemies whom the Lord had expressly devoted to destruction. We have the Prophets declaration, *That the Lord is departed from him; That he hath rejected him, and rent away his Kingdom and given it unto thy self.*

1 Sam. 15. 22.
23. 27.

When he is divested of his Princely Power, and Regal Majesty, and the Crown setled upon thy head by an Act of Heaven; not to assert thine own right and title is more than an effeminate weaknes, it can be no less than a supine stupidity. And has the holy Oyl been
poured

poured upon thy head to so little purpose? If that Oyl has made thy person sacred, has it added no vigour, no activity to thy spirit? He that has given thee the Crown hath given thee the sword also to secure and guard it; and not to draw it in thy own defence is to receive it in vain. Give some proof of thy Princely Prowess and Magnanimity, and suffer not thy Title to be any longer subject to dispute or question. Lay hold upon the present opportunity, which a happy Providence hath put into thy hands; and let this day be the period of his reign, that it may be the commencement of thy own. These we may imagine were the Arguments which *David's* Servants had mustered up to strengthen their temptation, when they did advance the proposition to assault his Loyalty.

And now behold the *Philosophical* moderation of *David's* spirit. Behold a *Conflict*, a *Victory*, a *Crown* and *Triumph*. That Cave was the field, and the Combate was wonderful. *David* wrestles, and *Anger* played the Champion. *Soul* was the matter of the Combate, God the spectator and the judg. What a sharp Conflict was here betwixt Sense and Reason, self-love & Loyalty, kindness towards his suffer-
ing

ing friends, and allegiance towards his dread Sovereign? But *David* was as firm and steadfast as a Rock in his resolved integrity. Neither the memory of former sufferings, nor the sense of present streights, nor the fear of future dangers, nor the solitude of King *Saul*, nor the imporunity of his own party, nor the hopes of impunity, nor the possession of the Kingdom upon the death of *Saul*, could prevail with him to avenge himself, or shake his steadfast Loyalty.

This victory was more glorious than his triumph over the Giant; the proud *Philistines*; for there he subdued but a single enemy, but here he conquered himself and his whole Army. *Saul's* life was precious in *David's* eyes, and he did abhor to kill him. Nor was this Policy in *David*, but Conscience. That which was *Saul's* fear, was his best security. He

1 Sam. 16. 21.

was afraid of *David*, because God was with him. And why so? God doth restrain the spirit of Princes: And he it was that bridled up the spirit of *David*. As *Joseph* in another case, How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? Such a wickedness *David* deemed it to take away *Saul's* life; and therefore when he had him at another time at the
like

1 Sam. 18. 12.

like advantage, he gave this charge to his Captain Abisbai, *Destroy him not, for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lords Anointed, and be guiltless?* 1 Sam. 16. 9.

Obj. But this Prince was wilful, merciless, and a Tyrant. Agitator.

Sol. We are obliged to be dutiful, *Not only to the just and gentle, but also to the morose and froward.* And if I be under a violent persecution, it is not lawful for me, *vim vi repellere*, to incounter force with force; but when the Aggressor is my equal or fellow-subject: And then it must be done, *cum inculpata tutela*, when I can make no escape by flight, and have no other way for my defence. But my Prince has his Authority over me from Heaven; and therefore I must be subject to him, out of *Conscience*, *■ for the Lords sake.* The sword is put into his hand by Almighty God; and for any private Person, or any *Club* of subjects, *** to wrest it out, is a double Usurpation. They do invade Gods *Sovereignty*, who say, *Vengeance is mine* and the Princes *Perogative*, whose office it is to *protect* and *punish*; when

1 Pet. 2. 17, 18.

* For the King is not anointed over single Persons, but over Gods Inheritance, 1 Sam. 10. 1.

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we 17. the head of the Tribes.

we will be our own Protectors, and defend our selves against the order of God and Man, we deservedly forfeit the Protection of them both.

Obj. But that Power, which God had put into this Prince's hands to inable him to Protect, he did imploy to persecute.

Sol. Why in that case, there is no necessity to resist, because then, God has made it our duty to suffer. *Pet. 3. 17.* *And it is better, if the will of God be so, to suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing.* God gives thee an opportunity to exercise thy Faith and Patience; thy self-denial and thy meekness; thy Equanimity and generous Reliance upon him. And when he calls thee to this suffering, he is well able to reward thee for it. *Mat. 5. 10.* *Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake.* You are not left without a precedent; *Pet. 3. 14.* *For the joy that was set before him,* Christ himself was pleased, *Heb. 12. v. 2.* *to endure the Cross and despise the shame.* And he left us an example that we should not *Pet. 2. 21, 23.* *avenge our selves, but follow his steps in Obedience unto blood, committing both our cause and our selves to him, who judgeth righteously.* And this was exactly

exactly Davids Practice. The Lord judg be- 1 Sam. 24. 1
tween me and thee; and the Lord avenge me
of thee; but mine hand shall not be upon
thee. As saith the Proverbs of the Antients,
Ab impiis egredietur impietas, (which is, H. Card.
an argument, quod impium est se ulcisci)
wickedness proceedeth from the wicked, but
mine hand shall not be upon thee. This was
his profession unto Saul; and his complaint
to Almighty God was to the same effect;
Princes have persecuted me without a cause, Psal. 119. v.
but my heart stands in awe of thy word. 161.

Obj. But the Souldiers do here remind *Agitators.*
David of something that had bin delivered
by God himself in favour of their preten-
sions.

Sol. When Souldiers turn Preachers, every
 Act of Providence that seems to favour
 their designs, shall be the voice of God;
 every opportunity to do mischief to such as
 they oppose, shall be interpreted a com-
 mand from Heaven to do it. And for ought
 appears in the sacred Text, there was no-
 thing else in their Allegation. Let us grant
 that the Lord had said to *David* in exprefs
 Terms; *Behold, I will deliver thine enemy*
into thy hand: Yet he did not determin the

vers. 4.

Person; he did not tell him, That enemy was his Sovereign: If he had said expressly; *Behold, I will deliver Saul into thy hand*; Yet, what to do, had bin a further question? what? to kill him; no, *that thou maist do to him, as it shall seem good to thee*. And a loyal heart will Interpret this of an happy opportunity to shew a signal duty and kindness; not take it for a commission to destroy him, against so many Pregnant Interdictions to the contrary. And this was the sence and the sentence of *David*, and he was a Prophet.

John 19. 11.

3. For the argument drawn from Providence it is not only irrational and unsafe but impious. When *Judas* committed a rape upon Divine Providence to gratifie his Avarice, he did highly aggravate his own guilt: so our Blessed Saviour argues the case before *Pilate*, *Thou couldst have no Power at all against me, except it were given thee from above*; therefore he that delivered me unto thee bath the greater sin. And sure *David* had not taken Divine Providence by the right handle, if he had abused it unto Parricide; As long as he continued steadfast in his duty, he might rely upon it, that
Provi-

Providence was not weary to protect him, but awake to watchover him, and to put him into possession of the Throne, whenever it should legally become void for him. But we cannot offer a greater contumely to Almighty God, than to set his Providence at variance with his Commands, and make his Goodness contradict the Justice of his own Ordinance. If it be lawful to forsake the plain path of his Commands, to follow the maze of Providence; then the misfortunes of any Adversary would be a good warrant to destroy him; and the rule of our practice should not be, as the Apostle hath set it, *If thy enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink*: but thus, *If thy enemy hunger, starve him; if he thirst, give him gall and vinegar, and heap coales of fire upon his head*: Not to melt him into a reconciliation and kindness, but to consume him into ashes. And if this had bin warrantable, what had Davids own doom bin, when he was forced to flee from the face of Absalom? when God had put out his Glory, and cast his Throne down to the ground? Then the Inference had bin Irrefragable, *Persecute him and take him; for there*
is

is none to deliver him. But this is ill Logick and worse Divinity.

— Careat successibus opto,
Quisquis ab eventu facta notanda putet.

Let us reflect upon *David's* imprecation against such as follow Providence, that they may add affliction to affliction. Let their Table be made a snare, and their wellfare a trap, pour out thine indignation upon them, and let their habitation be desolate; why? for they persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded.

4. 'Tis true *David* was anointed to succeed, but till he was duly put into possession, he was but a Subject: And being *beir* Apparent to the Kingdom, it became him so much the less to be a *Traitor* to that Crown, to which he had so fair a Title.

5. And to be afflicted in the *Minority* of his exaltation, may be of *Singular* advantage to him. The *Rod* may discipline the *Scepter*, and he that has felt how keen the sword is, may learn by that sad experience, to manage it so much the better; when it is actually put into his hands by the Lord of Hosts; he that has practised obedience in
the

the *Passive* sence, knows the better how to govern others. *The Captain of our Salvation was made perfect through sufferings.* And herein *David* was to be his *Type*; and therefore he must not ascend the throne upon steps made by the treasonable slaughter of his Predecessor, but be led to it by the *Cross*, and take *Persecution* in the way to his *Coronation*. And his faithful Servants must be content to *suffer with him*, that they may be advanced and *glorified together*. And thus much of the Agitators plea, and of that Combination of Probabilities which did concur to attempt his loyalty, viz. *Provocation* and a seeming *Necessity*, *Prediction* and *Providence*, *Opportunity* and a just *Title* to the Crown, with the *Importunity* of almost forlorn Adherents.

Only We have the *Issue* of the Temptation in two particulars:

1. *In what David did.*
 2. *In what he suffered.*
1. He did not slay *him*; he abhorr'd that practice, *Sauls* life was precious in his eyes. But to prevent a further mischief of his enraged Souldiers, he arose up himself, and cut
off

off the *Skirt* of his *military robe*. And he had a threefold end in it.

1. To confute the *Calumnies* of his enemies, who had accused him for a *Traytor*; wherefore, saith he, dost thou give ear to the insinuations of those men, who would perswade thee, that *David seeks thy life*? [Where by the way we may observe, that *David* does not impute it to *Saul's* inclination, (his duty taught him to believe the King of himself would do no wrong;) but to the malice of some *Sycophants*. *Behold, thine eyes see, that the Lord hath this day delivered thee into my hands, and I was advised to kill thee; but mine eye hath spared thee, for I said, I will not put forth my hand against my Lord, for he is the Lords Anointed.*

2. And hereby he does vindicate his own *Innocency*. As it was a demonstration of *Christ's* Power to make a rescue, when the *Souldiers* which came to apprehend him, were struck down backward at the dread of his presence: So it was a *Demonstration* of *David's* Innocencie, that he cut off but *Saul's skirt*, when it was in his Power to cut off his life. *My Father, see the skirt of thy Robe*
in

in my hand. My taking this only, and not thy life from thee, is a clear evidence, That I have no Treason or Malice in my heart against thee. And David had

A Third end in it: To convince Saul of the error into which some Sytophants had misled him, and to melt him into reconciliation and kindness: And so it happened; for Saul melted into tears, and an ingenuous acknowledgment of Davids tender loyalty: And it came to pass when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lift up his voice, and wept; and he said to David, Thou art more righteous then I; for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil. And thou hast shewed this day how thou hast dealt well with me, for as much as when the Lord had delivered me into thy hand, thou killedst me not; for if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? Wherefore the Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day. This was the first, What David did.

Verf. 16. too.

2. What he suffered; His heart smote him. There was a palpitation of the heart doubtless in him, through the commotion

of his blood and spirits, and the tumult of his passions. For hope and fear, anger and compassion, were in conflict, while he was upon such a hazardous attempt. But this in the Text was not a *natural palpitation* of the heart, but a *check*, nay a *sharp stroke* of Conscience. For shew me a *guilty* Person, and I will presently shew thee his *liſtor*; his Tormentor: Shew me a *Traitor*; and I will shew thee a *Scaffold* where the *block* and *Axe* lyes for his *Execution*; that is, the *Conſcience* of the *malefactor*: Conscience is the *Centinel* of the Soul, placed there to descry the enemy upon his approach, to give us the *Alarm* and notice of the danger; If the enemy hath stoln upon us, and entred our Quarters by surprise, it is his office then to check us, and rouse us up to make resistance and expel him. And upon this account, and to this effect did *David's* heart smite him. For *David*, found himself guilty, and the *Rabins* say, he was afterwards punished by *Retaliation*, when his own garments would not serve to keep him warm. Yet others tell us he was *Innocent*, for what he did was to a good end, and out of an honest and good intent; only, I say they, it

is the part of good minds to startle at the Face of the *Serpent*, at the appearance of evil, and to fear guilt where really there is none to be found. But, by the favour of these *Civil Advocates*, a good end cannot sanctifie a *bad action*: If the fact be *undecent*, a good meaning can never give it a good Complexion. We must not make our Prince his weakness a *Foile* to set off our own integrity. When *Hann* had cut off the garments of his Ambassadors, *David* could not but resent the affront, and was so highly incensed at it, he revenged it with a sharp Hostility. And shall *David* offer such an indignity to the King his Master? Kings are jealous of their Honours; and good subjects are modest upon that account, fearful many times to receive due praise, lest it should beget suspicion, and raise envy, by a misconstruction, as if it were a means to draw the eyes and hearts of subjects from their Prince to themselves: for this reason *Joab* when he had besieged *Rabbah* and brought it to so great distress, it could not hold out a storm; he sends to his Prince to come and take the honour of the Conquest. *Now therefore gather the*

1 Sam. ro

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rest

12.28. rest of the People together, and encamp against
 the City and take it; lest I take the City; and
 it be called after my name. It sounded ve-
 ry harsh in Saul's ears, he did not like the
 musick at all, when the women sung to
 18.6. their Tabrets, Saul hath slain his thousands,
 and David his ten thousands. For a subject
 to be eminently prosperous against his Princes
 enemies, is not always safe for him; but to
 attempt any thing against his Person that
 may lessen his Grandeur or his Prudence in
 the esteem or opinion of his People, is inju-
 rious; and if it be a matter of reproach
 to his Royal Dignity, it is more heinous,
 and amounts to Treason.

2.2. Dost thou see thy Prince cover his feet
 (as it is said here of Saul)? Dost thou ob-
 serve any thing *undecent* in his conversation?
 Thou mayest have a loyal heart, no design
 to destroy him; but draw not out the sword of
 a virulent tongue, to cut off his skirt (to
 diminish his due esteem and splendour), to
 curtail his Robe of Defence and Dignity,
 the wealth, and strength, and honour, and
 reputation of a Prince; for his Prudence,
 Justice, Valour, and other Virtues, are as
 his Military Robe. They do clothe, defend,
 and

and adorn his *Majesty*. If any passion or temptation hath prevailed with thee to cut off any *Skirt* of this *Robe*, to eclipse or impair any of thy *Princes Interest*; Recollect thy self, and reflect upon the offence, and let thy heart *smite thee*; and as a fruit of thy true repentance, study to make amends for it. So did *David*, *confregit viros suos*; His Party were bent to murder *Saul*, but he broke their obstinate resolution, by his loyal exhortation, *The Lord forbid*, saith he, *that I should stretch forth my hand against Saul*; For though there be nothing in his nature, nothing in his temper, nothing in his carriage toward us, that may oblige me; yet there is a *civil obligation* lyes upon me, he is my *Master*; and a pious Reverence Ver. 6, 7. I owe him, for *he is the Lords anointed*. When he could alledg nothing else, he doth fetch an argument from heaven to plead on his behalf; though *non propter sanctitatem*; yet, *propter sacramentum*: God hath put the *holy oile* upon him; and that renders his Person *Sacred* and inviolable. That *Graec.* that has *dignified* him, doth restrain me; whatever the qualities of his natural *Constitution* are, His *Majesty* is *most excellent*; and:

and as he is Gods *Vicegerent*, I must have a *Religious veneration* for him. And with these arguments he breaks the stubbornness of his rough Soldiers, and charms them into calmness and submission.

And now tell me, Shall we take our *Creed* in this point of *Loyalty*, from the *Sword-man*, or from the *Prophet*? Shall we govern our Practice by the bloody Counsel of the *Soldiers of Fortune*, or by the Judgment and Practice of the *man after Gods own heart*?

What a vast distance, what a direct opposition there is betwixt the Principles of *David*, and those of our late pretended *Godly Party*, the bloody *Tragedy* that was acted this Day upon our Gracious King of ever blessed memory, doth sufficiently witness.

If Divine Providence allow'd them an opportunity for this their attempt of Parricide, it was designed for their trial, and as well to shame, as to discover their secret malice and hypoerisie. They had no *Provocation*, but their own *Guilt*; no necessity but of their own making; no *Prediction* but a mercenary *Almanack*; and I am sure, no *Title* to the Kingdom, but what was pleaded by the *Husband-man* in the Gospel, *This is the beir, contras-*

us kill him, and seize upon his Inheritance. And this Argument, pressed by their own Avarice and Ambition, with the *Clamours* of a malicious giddy multitude, prevailed.

What *Jacob* upon his death-bed, bequeathed to those Brethren in iniquity, I shall apply to them, and so conclude; *Simeon and Levi* (for they went by couples, whether you count them by Nation, or by Faction, matters not) *are brethren, Instruments of cruelty are in their habitation. O my soul, come not thou into their secrets; unto their Assembly, my honour, be not thou united: For in their anger they slew a man; A man of Gods right hand; A man (as much as any) after Gods own heart; the best of men, and the best of Princes: And in their self-will they digged down a wall; A Government that was a Bulwark to our lives, our liberties, our fortunes; to defend them from violence and invasion: Cursed be their anger for it was fierce, and their wrath for it was cruel.*

But God be blessed, who hath repaired that Wall, by restoring the Son of that Royal Martyr to reign over us.

And for such of that *Combination* and *Brotherhood*, whose hearts are still so reconciled
to

to their bloody Practices, that they do not yet
smite them ; *Jacobs Propheſie* (which follows
 in the very next words) be their portion ; I
 will divide them in *Jacob*, and ſcatter them in
Israel ; Let their *Factions* be as the *dust* before
 the wind ; and their designs as the *grafs* upon
 the *houſe-top*, that withereth before it be pluck-
 ed up.

But let thy hand, O Lord, be upon the man
 of thy right-hand, our Gracious Sovereign ; make
 him ſtrong for thine own ſelf ; Clothe his enemies
 with ſhame, upon himſelf let his Crown flouriſh :
 That under his Government we may lead a
 quiet and peaceable life in all godlineſs and
 honeſty. So we thy People, and the ſheep of
 thy Paſture, will give thee thanks for ever,
 and ſhew forth thy Praise to all generations.

Amen.

Bo. Stanton's his book.
1682

NUMB. 17. 10.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Bring Aarons rod again before the Testimony, to be kept for a token against the Rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings, from me, that they die not.

WHen the flames of dissention do break out in the house of God, a Religious Prince can do nothing more noble, nothing more becoming his Royal Office, than to bring water to quench it. God having intrusted him with the Supream Power, is pleased also to deposite the Court-rolls of Heaven in his hands. He creates him, *Custos utriusq; Tabulae*, Defender of the Faith, and a Nursing Father of the Church. David even for Gods sake was glad to be a door-keeper in the house of God, that he might shut out profanation, and debar intruders from invading the Sacred Office, and committing a Rape upon

E

Holy

Holy Things. Besides, there is no Prince so strong in his *Militia*, and the *affections* of his people, but he will stand in need of Gods assistance; and the Priests interest lies chiefly here. Though weak and defenceless in himself, yet he hath the conduct of a Spiritual *Militia*; *Preces* & *Lacrymæ*, Prayers and Tears are at his Devotion. And these can prevail with God, and bring relief, if distressed, unto *Cæsars* Legions. So that *Interest* alone is sufficient to procure a reciprocal aid between them. The Priest is obliged to pay Homage to the Prince, to bless him in Gods name, to honour him before the people; and the Prince is reciprocally obliged to succour and support the Priest. *Aaron* was assigned to *Moses* for a *coadjutor*, to be his Prophet, his Spokesman to God and to the people. And *Moses* was enjoyned to be to *Aaron* instead of God, a *Sun*, and a *Shield*, a *Defence* and *Comfort*.

Indeed Controversies in Religion are seldom managed with that temper, that should keep them within their proper sphere. Men for the most part contending not so much for Truth as Victory: Debates commonly beget Animosities, and those Animosities are fomented into Parties and Factions. So that a *Schism* can

Exod. 7. 1.

Exod. 4. 16.

can no sooner arise in the Church, but it is presently attended with *Sedition* in the State. When the Church is in jeopardy through the commotions of a tumultuating people, the fluctuation of those raging waters does usually make the State sick, put the whole body Politick into a distemper. If *Aaron* be disturbed in his Office, *Moses* cannot long sit quiet upon his Throne. Divine Providence doth thus order it, that the Prince may find himself concern'd, as well in kindness to himself, (for his own tranquillity) as in love to God, to becalm such raging tempests, to bridle and restrain such stubborn dispositions. When the offices of Prince and Priest were united in one single person (as they were in *Melchizedec*, and by the law of nature in the first-born;) the necessity hereof was more visible, but not more important. When the administration of these Offices is committed to distinct persons, their interest is so mixt and twisted, that like *Twins* they thrive and fade, live and die together. Though the pretended quarrel be for *Liberty* in Matters of Religion, yet the Insurrection hereupon is as well against *Moses* as against *Aaron*. Hereupon the *Crown* and the *Myter*, the *Scepter* and the *Crosier* are concern'd

in Prudence to ingage in an inviolable league, for the mutual defence of one another. Upon this account *Moses* doth espouse the quarrel of the Priesthood, owns its Interest, and becomes its *Patron* under all perils. And this he does not fondly and rashly, but in the fear of God, and upon good advice ; yea by Gods own order and appointment. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, &c.*

Here we have a great controversie about a *Title of office*. The office of the *Priesthood*; In which there are three things considerable:

1. The *Case*, 2. The *Trial*, 3. The *Record*.

1. The *Case* is *Aaron's*; wherein we shall consider, 1. The *Competitors*, (amongst whom we shall find a *Plaintiff* and the *Defendant*). And 2. The *Patron*. In the 2. the *Trial*; we shall consider, 1. the *Jury*, and 2. the *Verdict*. A *Jury* of Gods own Impanneling, so that we may be sure it was upright and impartial. *Take twelve rods according to the number of the Tribes of Israel; And write the Prince of every Tribe his name upon his Rod. And lay them up in the Tabernacle of the Congregation before the Testimony, where I will*

will meet with you. And it shall come to pass Verf. 2. 3. 4. 5.
*that the mans Rod, whom I shall chuse, shall
 blossom.*

2. The *Verdict*, not given by way of
 Oracle ; for they had no great confidence in
 Moses, who was to report the Oracle. There-
 fore God speaks to their eyes by way of
 miracle ; and so the *Verdict* is according to
 Gods own direction. *And it came to pass* Verf. 8.
*on the morrow, That Moses went into the Taber-
 nacle of witness, and behold the Rod of Aaron
 for the house of Levi was budded, and brought
 forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded
 almonds.* In the third the Record, we shall
 consider, 1. the *Exemplification* of it ; and 2.
 the *Design*. And these are expressly in my
 Text, *Refer virgam ut servetur in signum.* And
 the Lord said unto Moses, *Bring Aarons Rod
 again, before the Testimony, to be kept for a
 token against the Rebels.* This I call the *Ex-
 emplification* of the Record, *Et quiescant que-
 relæ ;* And thou shalt quite take away their
murmurings from me, that they dye not. This
 is the *Design*, and purpose of it.

1. We will begin with the *Case*, *Aarons
 Case*, and first of the *Patron* of it, which was
 Moses : *Dixitq; Dominus ad Mosem.* The
Hierarchy

Hierarchy of the Church was not of *Moses's* Institution. The God of Order established an *imparity* amongst the officers of the Church. *Aaron and his Sons* were advanced to the *Priesthood*, and the *Levites* settled in a state of *Subordination* to them, by Gods own appointment. *Thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their Priests office.* They are immediately dedicated unto God to serve him in the highest sphere of Ministration: *And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron, and to what end? Bring the Tribe of Levi neer, and present them before Aaron the Priest, that they may Minister unto him.* The Investiture is from *Moses*, but the Direction and Authority is from God himself.

Moses, we see, had good warrant for this; but the Peoples jealousy suggested, that he had his own ends to serve under pretence of Gods Institution. They suspected he had a design to establish his own Throne and an usurped Prerogative; and they thought there was no way so likely to accomplish this, as by advancing his allies; his elder brother, *Aaron*, to the high-Priests Office. And if he could persuade the People that
this

chap 6.10.

erf. 9.

erf.10.

this establishment was by Gods own appointment, while the Glory of the Myter did put out their eyes and dazle their judgments, he might take his Advantage to make himself an absolute Prince over them. That this was their sense is evident from their discourse, *Ye take too much upon you; will ye put out the eyes of this People? and wilt thou [Moses] make thy self altogether a Prince over us?* Verf. 3. 13. 14.

Hereupon as well to vindicate the Integrity of Moses, as the Authority of his own Institution, God appoints Moses to be the Patron of Aarons Case, *Dixitque Dominus ad Moysen; And the Lord said unto Moses, &c.* 'Tis strange an Office that lyes under so much contempt amongst some, should be a matter of so much emulation amongst the Princes of Israel. Indeed it is a great Priviledg to have so free an access to God, as the Priest ever had; and a great Dignity to be next Moses (the Prince) as well in point of Honour as Authority. But if their eyes were dazled with the splendour of the Myter, Num. 18. 1. their heart should have weighed what a burden it is to bear the iniquity of the Sanctuary, and of the Priesthood. This haply might have taken off the envy, and we should

not

not have had so many *Rivals* to promote a Faction against the right *Incumbent* in the holy Office. Ambition started the dispute, which was promoted by *Corah* out of envy, and the Sons of *Ruben* his confederates; and began upon this pretence. Before the Tribe of *Levi* was separated to the Priests Office, the first-born of every Tribe was hal-
 lowed, as it were by right of *Primogeniture* to perform the duty. They took it ill to be divested of this Right (which the Law of nature had intailed upon them) and to see it translated intirely upon *Aaron* and his Sons, created matter of envy and indignation (especially in *Corah* and the Sons of *Ruben*). If one Priest must needs be settled over all the Tribes, why not the Son of *Ruben*, the first-born? For though his Father forfeited his birth-right, yet Gods Law doth not extend the penalty beyond the *third* or the *fourth* Generation; and by this time the intailed curse being cut off, it is just his posterity should be restored to the right of *Primogeniture*. This was very plausible for the *Rubenites* to plead, while they aimed likewise, in all probability, at the *Scepter*. But this would not serve *Corah's* turn; he
 affected

d. Bonfr.

Chap 16.2.

Num. 16.1.

Chap. 3.

Vers. 45.

Gen. 49.3.

1 Chron. 5.1.

affected an *Ecclesiastical* supremacy himself (so *Moses* tells him :) But he could not tell well how to make out his Title, for though he was of the Tribe of *Levi*, yet he was head but of the *Second* house ; *Aaron* was of the *first*. He was therefore to gratifie his envy by procuring *Aarons* Jurisdiction to be voted down, and his Power levelled, that himself might be exempted from all *Canonical Obedience*, and become an *Independent*. And then his Ambition suggested, That by his popularity and little Arts of insinuation, he might gather a numerous congregation. And to this end he courts the People, and pleads the cause of a *Godly party* ; *Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them*. And therefore sufficiently qualified to choose their own Priest, or administer to themselves. This Doctrine did so bewitch the People, that (even after the *Ringleaders* of the Faction, *Corah* and the *Sons of Ruben* were removed by a Signal and Stupendous vengeance) all the congregation (not one Tribe excepted) conspired against *Moses* and against *Aaron*, to carry on the design, until fourteen thousand and seven hundred of them were swept away

Chap 16.102

Exod 6.21.

Chap 16.3:

Chap 16.42.

Num. 16. 48.

with a *new* plague, and the rest silenced by a *Miraculous* decision of the controversy. In the interim, how does *Aaron* the Defendant, behave himself in this quarrel? why, he shews himself (as becoms a *Type* of Christ) worthy that Office, which they maliciously contended to wrest from him, when he sees that *wrath is gon out and the plague begun*: He takes his *Censer* to make an *Atonement*, and *standing between the dead and the living*, He exposeth his own life as a sacrifice for these his enemies; but for his cause he pleads not one word, but submits himself and it, wholly to him that judgeth righteously: and so we proceed to,

2. The Trial. But had not a *special Verdict* past against them already? Had they not acknowledged a *judgment*, upon the loss of 15000 Souls, swept away by a threefold Vengeance, the *devouring earth*, the *consuming fire*, and a *wasting plague*? But this is thought imputable to some rashness of conduct in the business, or to *Moses's* Interest and importunity with God. And so their Spirits being imbittered and their hearts hardened, those judgments made no impression upon them. In mercy therefore, God deals

deals with them in cool blood, and summons them to a *new Trial*; wherein he vindicates the Authority of his own Institution, and *seals Aarons Patient* for the sacred Office with a *miracle*.

In this *Trial* we are to consider, 1. The *Jury*, 2. The *Verdict*. In the *Jury* we may consider, 1. The *nature*, 2. The *number*, 3. The *place* of their meeting.

1. They are *Rods*. Men many times do so far degenerate, becom so unreasonable, that God appeals to senseless creatures to take up the dispute and decide the controversy, that he has with them, *Hear O ye mountains the Lords controversie*.

Besides, the *Rod* is an Emblem of *Authority*, an Ensign of *Jurisdiction*. *The Lord shall send the rod of thy power out of Sion*. And there is a threefold use of the *Rod*, consonant to that Emblematical signification. For 1. *Support*; for 2. *Chastisement*; and 3. *Mensuration*. And it belongs to the justice of Authority to *support* the weak and innocent, to chastise the wicked and impenitent, and to *mete* out reward and punishment respectively unto all. The *Rods* therefore are not unfitly put upon the *Jury* to find for the Priests office. And

Psal. 110.
Heb. 11.
Psal. 89. 32.
Apoc. 21. 15.

the Rods of *Almond-Trees* most *apposite* to this purpose; for this being the first of Trees that *awakes* out of the dead of Winter, and *shoots up to cloath* and *dress* it self, to it belongs the right of *Primogeniture* amongst the Trees; and therefore it is so much the fitter to determine upon what Tribe the *Sacred Priesthood*, a special branch of the right of *Primogeniture*, is to be transferred.

2. For the *number* of these Rods, there is some difference amongst Interpreters, because the Tribe of *Joseph* was divided into *two* Families, and had a *double* portion in the land of *Canaan*, and so upon that *civil* account, there were twelve Tribes besides the Tribe of *Levi*; therefore some think there were twelve Rods besides the Rod of *Levi*. But such an inequality had been apt to breed another quarrel; and therefore it is more probable, there were but twelve Rods, according to the number of the Tribes in their Original; and that these Rods were all of the same stock, the same growth, the same gathering and preparation, that there might be no *disparity* to beget new cavils touching the decision. And because the Tribe of *Levi* was divided into two Families, though *Corah* head of the

the

the *second* House, and *Aaron's* Competitor or Numb. 26.11
Adversary at least, was extinguished, and his
Sons (being preserved by special Providence)
probably had yielded the pre-eminence to
Aaron, (deeming it sufficient honour for them
to be dignified with that lustre that would
be reflected upon them from the Glory of the
head of their *Elder Family*,) yet to take off
all colour of dispute about the Succession,
God gave exprefs order, That *Aaron's*, and
not *Levi's* name, should be written upon the
Rod for the *Tribe of Levi*.

3. For the place where this *Jury of Rods*
were put together, it was the Tabernacle of Verf. 3.
the Covenant before the *Testimony*, before
the *Tables of the Law*, by the *Pot of Manna*; Pſal. 94.
to signify, that the *Rod* is an excellent *Uſher*
of obedience to the *Law*; and if it prevails
not to that effect, that then it is a ready in-
strument to drive us from the comfort of the
Pot of Manna, the benefit of the *Sacrament*.
Or it might be intended that the sacredness of
the place should take away all suspicion of
fraud, and add Authority to the miraculous
obſignation of *Aaron's* office. This being the
place where God did vouchſafe to exhibit his
Gracious presence to determine them upon
appeal,

appeal, in all doubtful Cases: the Rods were placed here, to signifie, that this being a kind of Sacred Lottery, the event was wholly at Gods disposal; *Greg. Nyss.* That the grace of Priesthood is not of men but of God. *Ideo & Aaron Sacerdotem ipse elegit; ut non humana cupiditas in eligendo sacerdotem preponderaret, sed gratia Dei: non voluntaria oblatio, nec propria assumptio, sed celestis vocatio.* Ambros.

And now this Emblematical Grand Jury will afford us an excellent Definition of a Priest or Bishop; he is a person split off the common stock of Mankind by a special act of separation; not rooted in the earth, not fed with the crude juices of nature, to soften and make him pliant to the bent of evil inclinations; but mortified to the motions of the flesh; dead to the Temptations of the World; that being impregnated with blessings supernatural; with grace and knowledge, he may bring forth abundant fruit for the service of Gods Church. And the *Verdier* which went for Aaron represents him to be such a person: For behold, *his Rod had budded buds, and brought forth leaves, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.*

Here

Here is a *production*, which nature never had a due conception of, at least never travel'd for it. A *dry Rod* swell'd into *turgent buds*, and buds dilated into lovely *blossoms*, and digested into wholsome *fruits*, and all *ex tempore*; a *threesfold* miracle to render *Aaron's* election the more certain and unquestionable. *Buds and Flowers and Fruit*; here's provision for *posterity* by an orderly *succession*. And the order of their pullulation is an evidence that Gods Grace does not destroy *Nature*, or pervert the *common course* of it; but only *assist, quicken, and advance* her in her operations.

Austin calls this Rod, *Sacramentum Sacerdotale*; and *Is. Pelusiot*, *typus Sacerdotis*. The *Type of the Priesthood*. And what doth it signify, *Nisi quod nunquam Sacerdotalis marcescat gratia*, saith *St. Ambrose*. The Fathers observe further of this Tree, that the *outside*, the *rinde*, the *husk*, the *shell*, are *hard and astringent, sharp and bitter*; but the *inside*, the *fruit*, the *kernel*, are *sweet, nutritive, and refreshing*. This is a significant *Hyeroglyphick* of the *Priests duty*. It instructs him to be *vigilant and active* in his office, *austere and mortified* in his life, *patient and handy* to endure the

De Temp. Ser.
99. ep. l. i. ep.
50.
Lib. 10. ep. 82
Origen. Pelu-
sior.
Ambr. Austin
Fructus nuci
amaram qui-
dem & aspe-
ram corticem
habet, sub quo
inter quod
est esculentum,
&c. Theod. &
Hier. in Jer. i

the storms of reproach and opposition, while he is *discharging* himself in a *salutary fruitfulness*. Let him be *cloathed* with the *leaves* and *blossoms* of a decent Conversation; but laden with the *fruits* of all good works; that the Church under the inspection of such Pastors may be as a *Garden of Nuts*, and the *Sponse* delight to descend into it with his train of Graces, and inconceivable consolation.

In short, all Priests have their Rods; but all Rods are not thus *florid*, thus *fruitful*. Such as are so, without all peradventure are of Gods election and establishment, as was *Aaron*.

And now I hope such as are of *Israel*, of what Tribe soever, will submit to Gods *Arbitration*, and be reconciled to *Aaron*, and *kiss* his Rod; pay a due regard, a dutiful veneration to that Office and Ministry, which God hath vouchsafed to dignify with a threefold miracle. To this end a publick *Record* is made of it, to be kept inviolable. *And the Lord said unto Moses, bring Aarons Rod again before the testimony, &c.*

1. *Before the testimony*, That whensoever they came to *consult* God about any *emergent* difficulty, they might not presume to seek his assistance to *degrade* the Priesthood,

or cut off the line of succession, which he had established by such wonderful Prodigies, and to which he had assigned Sanctuary in his holy place; for thither the Rod is brought, and brought thither it is.

2. *Ut servetur*, that it might be kept; such as attempt to undermine Gods sacred Constitutions by the rudeness of popular tumults, do but make them take the firmer roots, and engage God the more to shew signs and wonders for their preservation. Aarons Rod shall find Sanctuary, and be preserved in perpetuam rei memoriam.

3. *Ut servetur in signum*, It shall be kept for a sign. Mans memory is naturally treacherous; and nothing can spoil it sooner than ingratitude and envy. Therefore God does here teach us an Art of Memory, by prescribing tokens to cure us of our forgetfulness; such memorials being significant to the use of edifying: though but Ceremonies, God prescribes them, and though they be but of Mans Institution, he allows of them, Such signs do not confer Grace ex opere operato, not by any real efficacy; no nor yet by way of impetration, they cannot do it. They have no Natural Power, no divine

Hic et Chap.
16.38.

Joel 22.10.

Promise for it. But they are fair *Objects* to excite and refresh the Memory. And he that will either *eschew evil or do good*, must first remember that it is his duty, and in this fence and to this effect, every *monument* of Gods Justice, every remanent *instance* of the Divine Mercy, may become *sacramental* to us.

Numb. 26. 30.

But had Almighty God left himself and his Servant *Aaron without witness* hitherto? No, those 250 men with *Corah* and some others, they became a *sign*. And the *brassen Censers* of those that offer'd incense, were made a *sign* too; they were converted into *plates* for a *covering* of the Altar to be a *Memorial* unto the children of *Israel*. They could not approach the Altar, but the *reflection* of those *plates* was a cleer conviction of their late *Miscarriages*. But when men will proceed in their sin after judgment, they provoke God to erect more *signs* to upbraid their *stubbornness* and *ingratitude*; when they importune him contrary to his expresse *Revelations*, they get nothing by it in the end, but the *brand* of a more *lasting infamy*: For

Chap. 16. 40.

4 This Rod is kept in *signum* *Rebellium* fili-

filiorum Israël, for a token against the Rebels. God had past an *Act of oblivion* upon Mo-
 ses's Intercession, in favour of this People, Numb. 14. 21.

Dimisi peccatum populi hujus, juxta verbum tuum. But God forgets our sins, upon con-
 dition we keep a Record and repent of them. If we do repeat them, we revive the memory of our past transgressions; and set up a light, by which those dim characters of our guilt, over which the hand of charity had drawn a curtain, become legible. And yet even here the inestimable Goodness of God is remarkable; he does so mercifully chastize their pride; that the testimony of their contumacy shall be the means of their cure, a provision for their amendment, and an Antidote against the peril of Recidivation. This Rod is to be kept for a token, *Ut quiescant querela, ne moriantur.* To take away their Murmurings from me, (yea and against me too, for they were not so much against Aaron as against the Lord); That they die not, and that was the Design in this Trans-
 action.

Ut quiescant querela, to silence and still their Murmurings. Ambition is restless and knows no bounds. *Cogitet qui honorem affectat*

affectat tempestatem se affectum. He that affecteth Honour does court a tempest; for, *Quid est potestas culminis nisi tempestas mentis?* Such as climb the pinnacle of Ambition are tossed with the greatest tempests. These *Israelites* began with *Envy*, proceeded to *Murmuring*, and at last grew insolent even to an *insurrection*; they make a forcible entry upon the sacred office, and commit a notorious *riot*, wherein many thousands perish. God having installed *Aaron* and his Sons in the Priests Office, added this sanction to the establishment, *The stranger that cometh near shall be put to death*; Yet their Ambition was grown so great, and their Animosities so high; That God saw it time to take up the quarrel, else all the Tribes had died in it. The earth swallowed them up; and yet they murmured: The Fire consumed them; and yet they murmured; The Plague made havock of them; and yet they murmured. And this spirit of perverseness was so great a provocation to a noble and ingenuous nature, God could not but be severe in punishing of it. They had rejected their *Guides*, and were ready to stone any charitable *informer*. Nothing but a lasting miracle can strike and silence.

110.

al. 106. 16.

amb. 3. 10.

amb. 14. 10.

silence them; *Aarons Rod* inshrind in the *sanctuary*, must compose their spirits, and make peace betwixt God and them, betwixt them and themselves. If it cannot *heal* their perversities, it will so far charm them into temper, as to *bridle* and *restrain* their boldness. They will now suffer *Aaron* quietly to perform his Office; and his *Ministry* will be a means to keep off future judgments. And to this end, the Lord said unto *Moses*, *Bring Aarons Rod again, before the testimony to be kept, &c.*

What *Aaron* was amongst the Tribes of *Israel*, the same, upon the matter, is the *Bishop* in his Province, and *Corah* was the figure of such as make *Rents* and *Schismes* in the Church of Christ; who are therefore said to have perished in the gainsaying of *Corah*, as in their *Representative*. And yet, Good God! What an *Insurrection* hath been made amongst us upon that account? *Aaron*, he was voted down and *deposed*; and in fine you cannot forget what became of *Moses*. But (to make haste out of that wilderness, and from amongst those *fiery serpents* that stung so deadly) *Moses* must be recalled to appease our *tumults*, to still our *murmurings* and

Application.

Jud. Ep. v. 11

and settle us in Tranquillity. To this end *Dixit Dominus*, The Lord spake unto his Majesty; not *Immediately* by a voice from Heaven, but by the voice of holy Scriptures and ancient Councils; by the voice of Reason and Experience, by the voice of fundamental Laws and Customs; by the voice of Orthodox Fathers and dutiful Sons; by the voice of *Royal blood*, and by the voice of our great disorders and confusions. Many *Cobwebs* were to be swept down from our Church-windows, and much rubbish to be swept out of our Church-doors; and much dust to be brusht off the garments of *inferiour* Priests and Levites; some things were amiss in the house of God, and no such Rule as *Aarons Rod* to square out a Reformation. These were the Lords voice crying unto *Moses*, to the King, *refer virgam*, bring the Rod again, &c.

Ezek. 7.10, 11.

But had we not a Rod already? A rod with a vengeance, a Rod of *Corah's* own stock, of *Corah's* own gathering; *Floruit virga, germinavit superbia, iniquitas surrexit in virga*. Ours was just of the same constitution. The *Radix*, the root of it was *iniquity*, and that branched out into oppression and violence.

A rod of Iron this was, that broke the Royal Scepter, and beat down the Royal Branches, and dash't the Church in pieces; A ragged staffe, whose fangs were steel'd with Malice, and died with innocent blood. It knockt down Moses, and thrust out Aaron: away with such a Rod, and God be thanked, this Rod of the wicked did not rest upon the lot of the Righteous; though it was somewhat long in motion, rowling up and down, yet it did not, it could not rest, it was acted by such a vertiginous spirit. This Rod was at last thrown away, and Moses restored. And the Lord said unto Moses, bring Aarons Rod again before the testimony.

Not a Rod of Aarons own growth or gathering, but a plant which the Heavenly Father hath planted: For no man taketh this Heb. 5. Honour to himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron. Our Rod is that, which undoubtedly sprung from the root of Jesse: As Joh. 20. my Father sent me, so I send you.

Out of that ground it shooteth up in the Church of God; and all Antiquity sets forth the Lineage of it, in the visible succession of Bishops, from the Apostles, in the several Churches of their plantation.

In Tabernaculum, Bring it into the Tabernacle

nacle; there it hath the Approbation of Gods eye, the protection of his Presence. From hence therefore it must take direction to minister in subordination to the Authority and Honour thereof; there it is installed, *ut servetur in signum*; lodged there in safety; obliged therefore to serve the Interest of the Church, which is the Interest of God and of immortal Souls. In order hereunto it is set up *in signum*, for a sign: Yes, and *in signum ad sagittam* too, as a mark for the Arrow. It is the Prophets complaint, *Behold I and the children, which God hath given me, are for signs and wonders*. It was our Saviours own lot, he was set up, *in signum contradictionis*, a sign liable to great contradiction; against him they shot out their Arrows, even bitter words. And, if so bold with Aaron himself, they will not forbear his substitute; if they forbear not the chief Bishop, they will not spare his shadow. As long as Aaron is set up for a sign in the Church, there will be found such Archers; we have them in our Text, with their quiver full of bitter Arrows; nay their Arrows are upon the string, and upon the flight too. As long as they continue to be, *filii Rebellionis*, while they

they retain their stoward disposition; *non quiescunt querela*, we shall never be free from Murmurings.

But are there any of this breed left in our Israel? Has not the Gracious Act of oblivion quite extinguished this unquiet spirit? If it has, what meaneth then this *lowing* and this *bleating*, which we hear? Are there not a many *Murmurers* attempting to exasperate the people into a new insurrection, that they may once more wrest the Rod out of the hand of Aaron? And do these men look for a sign too? yes, they do, and they might see a wonderful sign from heaven, if they were not blinded with pride and prejudice, and an obstinate Spirit: *Ecce Dominus*, behold the Lord himself hath given us a sign; *De-* 1 Sam. 15. 14.
disti metuentibus, thou hast given a token for them that fear thee. At the tears and prayers of the Church, God saved her with the wholesome defence of his own right-hand. For the change amongst us, by the Restauration of the King, was no other than *mutatio dextræ Altissimi*, wrought by the right-hand of the most-high. A sign from heaven this was, without all peradventure. Yet these men are not satisfied, they look for, and preach for,

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and

and pray for, *another sign*; and what sign would they have? The *seven Angels* with the *seven plagues* and *vials* of Gods wrath? Would they have more fire come down from heaven? Alas! *They know not what spirit they are of.* He that came not to destroy mens Souls, but to save them; did not ordain *Aarons Rod* for such a sign. If that Rod did turn the *rock into water* (as some have imagined) yet, to be sure, it did not turn the *water into blood*: It may bring forth *contrition* and *refreshment*, but not *destruction*: It *bodes* better things to mankind, even to these *Refractory* and stubborn children: 'Tis *signum salutare ne moriantur*; A sovereign preservative, *That they die not.*

That is the end for which the Rod is introduced and *deposited* in the sanctuary. This Power of Discipline, *Dedit nobis in aedificationem*, God hath given it for edification, saith the Apostle, and not for your destruction. And yet he hath taught us to distinguish betwixt *yours* and *you*. Something was to be destroyed in them, though not their Persons; yet their *Carnalities*; their *vices*, their *Schismes* and *Disorders*, These works of the flesh. The Rod is to be administered,

poc. 15.

Num. 20. 9.

2. Cor. 10. 8.

2. Cor. 10. 8.

ministred, in *interitum carnis*, for the destruction of the flesh, *That the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.* Mortification is the way to life, and Reformation the door of safety, *He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a Soul from death.* This is the right Method; Gods Method in the Text, *et quiescant querelæ, &c. Thou shalt quite take away their Murmurs, &c.* 1 Cor. 5. 5.
Jam. 5. ult.

We see then why the Rod is placed in the sanctuary; not so much for *Aaron's* own advantage, that he may pride himself in the Power and Beauty of it, but for the benefit of others, even of such as do most oppose it. The remoter end is, *ne moriantur*, that they die not; but in order to this, the immediate end is, *Ut quiescant querelæ eorum*, to still *their murmurings*: The cure must begin here, care must be taken in the first place, as much as is possible to take away *their complaints and murmurings*, and how shall that be effected?

Why, *Virga est mater disciplina*, the Rod will open the eyes, if it be administred with a little honey applied to the top of it; when the asperity is sweetned with mildness and 1 Sam. 14. 2.

compassion, *The Rod and reproof giveth wisdom.* If the *viper* be beaten with a rod, it takes away his venom, and he becomes an excellent *Antidote* against poison. If we cannot *heal* their perversities, at least we may still their *murmurings*. And to this end the constitution of the Rod is very considerable.

It must be a *streight* Rod, that the infliction may be equal to the fault, *est enim verus præsul virga recta, aqualiter justitiam exercens atq; semper vigilans.* It must be a *solid* Rod to support the weak, and a *smart* Rod to correct the wicked, and a *stiff* Rod to defend the Innocent. Or (to keep still to the *Metaphor*) it should have these properties; It should be, 1. *solid*, 2. *vital*, 3. *florid*, and 4. *fruitful*.

1. A *solid* Rod, not *hollow*, loose or *spungy*, like a *cane*: For it is concern'd many times to encounter with a *Rack*; the heart of *flint*, and the face of *brass*; and therefore it had need be *solid* and *steel'd* with Resolution, that it may not yield to the *applications*, nor receive the *impressions* of an *importune* and *stubborn* spirit.

2. It must be a *vital* Rod, (and they say
Aaron's

ro. 29. 14.

cut. 25. 2.

L. P. ad Ez. 3.

zek. 19. 11.

ap. 2. 4. 6.

ap. 3. 8. 9.

Aaron's Rod did never *wither*, was never barren after it was deposited in the *sanctuary*.)

And this life must appear in a *threefold germination*; it must bud, 1. a *vital eye*, 2. a *vital tongue*, 3. a *vital sting*. 1. A *vital eye*, and so it must be, *virga vigilans*, like that of *Jeremy*, A *watching Rod*. 2. A *vital tongue*, and so it must be, *virga clamitans*, like that of *Micah*, a *preaching Rod*. 3. A *vital sting*, and so it must be, *virga stimulans*, like that of *St. Paul*, a *goading and a quickning Rod*.

Jer. 1. 11.

Mic. 6. 9.

1 Cor. 4. ult.

1. It must be a *watching Rod*, *Vigilat autem virga, cuncta populi peccata considerans, ut percutiat et corripiat delinquentes*. I have made thee a *watchman*, saith the Lord to the Prophet, The very essence of the Bishops Office consisteth in a *superintendency*, his work is to *watch for Souls*.

Hieron. in Jer.

1. 11.

Ezek. 33. 8.

Heb. 13. 7.

and 2 Tim.

4. 5.

2. A *preaching Rod*, if it be a genuine Rod of *Aaron*, it will speak to every man, and to every sin in its own Language. And *St. Chrysostom* tells us, that two things are requisite for correction and reproof, *ταπεινία, καὶ τρυφή*: a *discreet mildness* with an *ingenious liberty* of speech. *Plus tamen erga corrigendos agat benivolentia quam severitas; plus exhortatio*

tatio quam commotio, plus charitas quam potestas, saith *Leo*. Kindness is more prevalent towards the correction of Delinquents, than severity; charity of more efficacy than an imperious Power. For some dispositions (as *St. Austin* observes) are wrought upon, *magis docendo quam iubendo, magis monendo quam minando*; more by Persuasion than by menaces; such dispositions as are unrelenting at the spirit of meekness, to such other applications are highly necessary; and upon this account, the Rod is

3. *Virga stimulans*, a smart and goading Rod; and in this case, the great Apostle, out of very charity, resolves to use sharpness. The virtue of good-men is not *sine cuspidē vel aculeo*, not without some sting; and there are some tempers will require it.

Yet I would not have this Rod turned into a Serpent, unless it be with a design to swallow up the Rods of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, when they bewitch the People to withstand *Moses*. If any be so obstinate that they will not be corrected by *Aaron's Rod*; neither obedient to the voice, nor awed by the eye, nor quickened by the sting of it; especially if any be so insolent as to wrest the Rod out of *Aaron's*

Cor. 4. 21.

Cor. 13.
2, 10.

Exod. 7. 12.
Tim. 3. 8.

Aaron's hand; if he provokes *Aaron* to appeal to *Moses*, and *Moses's Rod* be thrown out after him, and that becomes a Serpent to him, he may thank his own stubbornness for that Transubstantiation; for instead of a gentle Rod he deserves to be whipt with Scorpions. The Prophet *Jeremy* saw a Rod, Jer. 1. 12, 13. and a seething Pot too; and it is the observation of *Origen*, *Si ergo tali virga* (Discipline) *non emendaris, in cacabum mitteris, & cacabus succendetur.* in Psal. 38. Homil. 2. If the Rod of Discipline cannot reform thee, thou shalt be cast into the seething Pot to be consumed.

3. It must be a *florid Rod*; some leaves it should have, not broad enough to lodge or shelter Serpents, but soveraign to heal, and then to hide the scar and blemish of the infirm and surprized Patient. But some sores are so deep, foul, and offensive, they must be drawn and laid open, in order to their cure; to furnish leaves to cover such, is to skin over an old sore, till it rankles, till it become more noisome and contagious.

But to make the Rod *florid* it must have blossoms as well as leaves. It is expected (whatever Habits are in fashion amongst others) that the Priests should be cloathed with righteousness.

132.16:

ousness and salvation; that they should be endued with the flower of Learning, and the beauty of Holiness. And why should not this have the advantage of Wealth and Honour to adorn and dress it up, as well as other Rods? Though such Secular accessions cannot make it the more Sacred, yet they may make it the more awful, which will make it also the more serviceable, both to the Church of God, and to *Moses* his Vicegerent. And this would be a means to make it what it should be.

93.
ap. 16.

4. A *fruitful Rod*; some perhaps do really mind nothing, but the leaves and blossoms to cloth and adorn them. So they may be kept warm and gay, they care for nothing else. But as *Leo* hath it, *Quâ Conscientiâ honorem sibi debitum vindicant, qui pro animabus sibi creditis non laborant? Bestiæ irruunt, & sepra ovium non claudunt. Fures insidiantur, & excubias non prætendunt. Morbi crebrescunt, & remedia nulla prospiciunt.* Feed thy flock with thy Rod, saith the Lord to his Prophet. The flock must be fed, and to that effect the Rod must be fruitful.

7.14.

There are bitter Almonds whose virtue is to allay the fumes, digest the crudities and dry

doe up the dimbledness of Intemperance, to
open Obstructions of the of Corruptions
and Oppression, to expell the wind that
flour of pride and vanity, to purge the reins
and the inward of all inordinate lusts and
passions, and very useful to smooth the skin of
a Christians heart with compassion, to make it
beautiful and lovely. And there are sweet Al-
monds too, which afford an oyle and milke to
close the wounds of a broken heart, to refresh
the weak, to cool the Calentures of distem-
pered Consciences, and bring them to repose
and comfort.

When we have such solid and such vital,
such sturd and such fruitful Rods as these
set before the flocke Methinks we should
all be of Jacobs breed, our inward concep-
tions, and outward productions, our hearts
and our works should be of the same com-
plexion, by the transforming Power of a cha-
rity. *For* concludes life consisteth in motion;
and the vigour of life discovers it self in the
quickness of that motion; and even by the
constitution of the Rod, it is instructed
I to

fable of that other, That it descends from
 the *tree of life*; They will cry out *Servetur*
 endeavour to have it *flourish*, and pray
 that it may be *preserved* and *prosper*, in
 the Church amongst us, to the Worlds
 end, *Amen*.



F I N I S.

Do. Stanton his Secy
July 30. 1682.